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RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 1089
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 3788
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0894
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 1622
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 6119
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 7026
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 4349
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 9208
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT 1773
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 2641
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 017594

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/05/2016
TAGS: [PK](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KTER](#) [PINR](#)
SUBJECT: BUGTI INTERRED, FAMILY IGNORED, BALOCHISTAN QUIET
BUT SEETHING

REF: A. ISLAMABAD 16944

- [1](#)B. ISLAMABAD 17044
- [1](#)C. ISLAMABAD 17255
- [1](#)D. ISLAMABAD 17547

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Peter W. Bodde,
Reason: 1.4 (B) and (D)

[1](#)1. (U) Protests over the August 26 death of Bugti tribal leader Nawab Bugti (refs A,B, and C) continued over the weekend. On August 31, the government announced that it had retrieved Bugti's remains from the cave in which he was killed. Its decision to bury the body rather than to return the remains to the family resulted in additional calls for demonstrations on September 3 and 6. The September 3 demonstrations were limited almost exclusively to Balochistan.

[1](#)2. (U) On September 1, the Dera Bugti District Coordination Officer and a few members of the newly-formed anti-Nawab Bugti jirga (Ref D) buried Nawab Bugti's remains in the family plot, but without the blessing or participation of the Bugti family. The family, which had demanded to be given custody of the remains, wanted to hold the funeral in Balochistan's capital Quetta, center of the protest over his death. Pakistan Muslim League (PML) leaders Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain and Mushahid Hussein were quoted in many papers as regretting that they had failed to ensure that the remains were respectfully returned to the Bugti family.

[1](#)3. (C) Calls by opposition parties and Baloch nationalists for a nationwide "shutter strike" on September 1 received a mixed response, with greater participation in Balochistan and Sindh than in the rest of Pakistan. A heavy security presence in major cities ensured that most demonstrations were peaceful; on balance, the strike failed to whip up public passions as the opposition has hoped. One member of Jamaat Islami's (JI) youth wing Shabbab-e-Milli lamented to post that the GOP had sidestepped the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal's (MMA) trap by not/not ordering mass arrests of MMA and other protest leaders. Another contact opined

that the nationwide strike call was a waste of time, saying that in areas outside of Balochistan, "those who came out were the usual Jumna (Friday prayer) crowd which is always available to the mullahs." On September 3, anti-government protests were limited to Balochistan, with approximately 5,000 demonstrators in Quetta and 5,000 others across the province.

14. (U) Following the September 3 demonstrations ended, six violent incidents occurred, including a grenade attack in Quetta; an attack upon a natural gas pipeline near Mastung; an improvised explosive device near a government office in Gwadar and a rocket fired at a Frontier Corps post in Khudzar. The grenade attack resulted in six injuries. Organizers had requested no violence during the demonstrations.

POLITICAL SHAKE-UP?

15. (SBU) In Quetta, the Balochistan National Party (BNP) announced it had resigned its seats in the Senate, National Assembly, Balochistan Assembly and district assemblies. The party said it would no longer participate in elections or support the current government. (NOTE: The BNP currently holds one Senate, one National Assembly and two provincial assembly seats. END NOTE) Other Baloch parties were discussing whether to follow the BNP's lead. The MMA, which holds 28 of the 65 seats in the Balochistan Assembly, will decide whether to resign its seats on September 5; most observers believe the MMA will opt to remain at the table. The two members of the BNP-Mengal faction quit the

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Balochistan Assembly, but their sole senator is not expected to resign from the National Assembly.

THE GOVERNMENT RESPONDS

16. (SBU) In an effort to reverse the anti-government media spin, Minister of Information Ali Durrani described Bugti, Khair Baksh Marri and Ataulla Mengal (other prominent and rebellious Baloch tribal sardars) as having "an outlook of terrorists." Durrani detailed a long charge sheet containing a range of crimes reportedly committed by all three leaders. Separately, Balochistan Governor Owais Ghani described the arsenal the government reportedly recovered in Bugti,s cave hideaway as including multi-barrel rocket launchers, 75 mm recoilless rifles, 82 mm mortars and surface-to-air missiles, all from the former Soviet Union, and channeled through Afghanistan and possibly India, according the Governor.

COMMENT

17. (C) GOP and military officials did themselves no favors by failing to reach an accommodation with Bugti,s survivors to return the Nawab,s remains for a family burial. Instead, the GOP,s insensitivity to the family's wishes and tribal traditions has prolonged anti-government criticism and spawned a new generation of conspiracy theories. Some media questioned the military's ability to quickly recover its soldiers' remains while requiring four additional days to recover the body of the Nawab. Others suggested that photos of the Nawab's undamaged watch and eyeglasses -- prominently displayed by government officials as proof of his death) actually suggested that that he was not killed by the cave,s collapse, but was shot at close range or killed in a gas attack. Even if the accusations against Bugti and the rebel sardars in Information Minister Durrani,s &charge sheet8 are on the mark, there is little chance of them sticking in the current media climate. END COMMENT.

18. (U) Consulate Karachi contributed to this report.
BODDE